This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Thompson · Memorial of Mrs. Lucy G. Marsh.
1868

US
13600
35

US 13609.35

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY

BOUGHT FROM THE
AMEY RICHMOND SHELDON
FUND

MEMORIAL

OF

MRS. LUCY GILPATRICK MARSH.

A FUNERAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE ELIOT CHURCH, BOSTON HIGHLANDS,

MONDAY, JUNE 22, 1868.

BY

REV. A. C. THOMPSON, D.D.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ELIOT CITY MISSION SOCIETY.

BOSTON:
GOULD AND LINCOLN,
59 WASHINGTON STREET.
1868.

LS 13609.35

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
BOUGHT FROM THE
AMEY RICHMOND SHELDON
FUND
March 10, 1938

FUNERAL ADDRESS.

When the Lord removed his servant Moses, there was but one mourner, and that mourner was all Israel. To-day a whole community is the mourner. A mother — may I not say, *the* mother — in Israel has been taken from us. A woman, a whole woman, an aged woman, a thoroughly Christian woman, — one worthy to have sat with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary "over against the sepulchre," to have returned with them, that she might assist in preparing sweet spices, and, when the Sabbath was past, to have come back again to the tomb, — is herself to be laid away to-day. We glance at her career and character.

It is of small moment where she was born, — it was in the town of Biddeford, Maine; of small moment that it was on July 3d, 1792; of small moment that she was the youngest of twelve children, none of whom now survive. But it is a point of interest to us, that, when a little past twenty years of age, she became by renewing grace a child of God; that the chief reason for leaving home, fifty years ago, was a persistent opposition, on the part of friends, to her Christian activity; that afterwards she left for a time her field of usefulness in this city to attend upon her mother in her last sick-

ness, and then had the satisfaction of rejoicing over the conversion of that parent at the same age she has now herself departed this life. Still later, and under the same circumstances, she performed a similar kind service for her father in his closing sickness, and was cheered by the hope of his conversion too, when just verging upon fourscore. Being in Biddeford at that time for ten months, she established a female prayer-meeting, and several conversions followed. She also, after much opposition, opened a Sabbath school, having obtained permission to occupy a school-house, but at the same time being forbidden to use wood belonging to the town. That, it was supposed, would prevent the attendance of children. But the noble woman was not to be baffled thus. In her own arms she carried fuel from her house. Of course the Sabbath school was a success.

She had previously had tempting offers, to the extent even of the homestead to be secured to her, if she would remain there; but Providence, as she believed, evidently called her to Christian labors in this city, and to her mind that was decisive. Pecuniary considerations might not divert her from the Master's service here. How far from a sinecure was that! While acting indefatigably as matron of a reformatory institution, she attended the prayer-meetings of the church to which she belonged, and a private devotional meeting preparatory to each of them. In addition to her regular Sabbath-school exercise, she once a week taught a class of colored children, and spent Saturday afternoons in visiting members of the same, besides paying weekly visits to persons in the House of Correction.

One of the senior members of this church hands me, by request, the following memorandum: * —

"I have known Mrs. Marsh since the year 1820, or about forty-eight years. In that year I came to Boston from the Andover Seminary, with several classmates, to spend a vacation in missionary labors, and made my home at a religious boarding-house, kept by Miss Witham and Miss Gilpatrick. As I recollect Miss Gilpatrick, — and I well recollect her, — she was the same sort of a Christian woman then that we have known her to be of late years, only without that grand development, which time and the grace of God have given her, placing her among the more remarkable Christian women of her generation. Miss Witham was married, not long after, to the Rev. Amos Bingham, brother of the missionary, and, at a later period, Miss Gilpatrick was married to the Rev. Christopher Marsh, pastor of the Congregational Church in West Roxbury. For several years before her marriage she had filled a responsible station in one of the most self-denying departments of the religious charities in Boston; and always, as I have understood, with the unbounded confidence of those who knew her, in her ability, integrity, and devotedness to the cause of her Redeemer, and in her unwearied efforts for the salvation of those placed under her care. Since that time she has been a striking illustration of an humble, devoted, self-denying, intelligent, useful follower of the Lord Jesus."

What might be expected of such a one as parishioner? Just what her pastor at Jamaica Plain,† and other friends

* Rev. R. Anderson, D. D. † Rev. A. H. Quint, D.D.

there testify. The church in that place, then struggling into existence, was not a little indebted to her. It was her constant endeavor to promote sociability in the congregation; she made it an invariable practice to call on all new-comers, and to request others to do the same. Never did she, except under necessity, absent herself from church meetings, nor omit to speak a kind word and also a faithful word to those whom she met, when suitable occasions presented. Her spirit and ways were peculiarly motherly. During her residence here, I have never looked upon her as a parishioner so much as a colleague, my senior, and one that may well be accounted a model.

What might be expected of such a one as pastor's wife? I indulge in no vague and conjectural portrait-painting, nor yield to any professional bias, but give the deliberate judgment of those acquainted, and qualified to speak. In the delicate relation now referred to, she was greatly beloved at West Roxbury;* her life there was that of a missionary laboring in the by-ways for miles around. It was very much owing to her truly self-denying and most energetic efforts, that a place of worship was built, for which, as for the communion service, she solicited funds. She collected the Sabbath school, and for a time superintended it herself. She gathered a female prayer-meeting, and a meeting of mothers, both of which she sustained almost unaided. Her kind attentions to the sick and afflicted, to the aged and the young, were unwearied.

In 1838, the Rev. Mr. Marsh, finding his health improved,

* 1834–1850.

was invited to settle again over the church in Sanford, Me., where he had first been a pastor. Soon after, there began a remarkable work of grace in that town, and during the short ministry there, till death closed her husband's labors, Mrs. Marsh toiled and prayed, and rejoiced over a spiritual harvest. It is not too much to say there will be weeping throughout the town of Sanford, where these remains are to be taken, when the news of her decease shall reach the place. What she was as a mother, faithful and tender, there are those present who can testify.

What now might be expected of one, with such a character and such antecedents, on becoming our city missionary? Precisely what we delight to record of her. In September, 1861, she began that labor amongst us. Singular devotedness, fidelity, and good judgment have marked her whole ministry here. Not long since she mentioned to a friend that she had taken this passage for her daily resting-place, — "Be careful for nothing." Of nothing that pertained to herself — ease, strength, or health — was she careful. The cause of the poor, and those spiritually perishing, she made her own. She gathered, and chiefly maintained, two or more series of weekly prayer-meetings, and a mother's meeting; she taught a Bible-class in the mission Sabbath school; and that school, by their tearful presence, now attest the deep regard which they entertain for her.

A sewing school, during the colder season, was one favorite method of usefulness. The first intimation of her coming in was the signal of a general brightening of faces, and her smiles, bestowed upon all, gave fullest satisfaction. While

interested in providing employment for each scholar during the session, her chief thought seemed to be, "How can I benefit these immortal souls?" To the utmost would she strive to win their attention to God's Word, to a hymn, or valuable story. Though coming to the school, often weary with labors elsewhere, she would still listen with great patience to the many questions asked, and would bear up cheerfully under the multiplied cares of the hour.

But her chief vocation was to visit from house to house. Go out with her into the region assigned. It is no fancy sketch that I draw. Those who have accompanied Mrs. Marsh supply the materials, if not the colors. In her walks through by-ways, after her character had become manifest, words of greeting would everywhere meet her from the little child and from older persons. The young were drawn to her, and for all she had a kind word and a wise word. In the sick-room her presence acted like a charm; the languid eye would brighten, and the name of Jesus was sure to be whispered in the ear. It was as easy for her to pray to our heavenly Father as to speak to any friend; her prayers were earnest, simple, confiding, and appropriate to the occasion and the person.

Her peculiar field presents phases quite varied, and which quite decisively test character. The concurrent testimony of those who have been associated with Mrs. Marsh more or less intimately, and have seen her in the different departments of Christian work, is that they cannot name a fault in her; that they have been deeply impressed with her singular fitness for such service; that they have found her always calm and col-

lected; that she never seemed surprised at any scene of destitution, or any amount of complaint poured into her patient ear; that she showed herself forbearing and sympathizing, yet watchful and decided; and that, if occasion required, — as occasion sometimes did require, — they found she could be stern.

She understood human nature well; character seemed to lie open to her eye. Attempts at concealment or deceit were almost always futile. One had need be master of chicanery to impose upon her.

Very few here know what courage there was in that heart. Never otherwise than womanly, never weakly feminine, she exhibited, when there was need, true heroism, a masculine daring of benevolence. She never boasted, — no truly courageous person is ever boastful, — she seldom spoke of what she had done; but there are persons living who know somewhat of a history, in former years especially, that shows the highest style of undaunted, self-forgetting intrepidity.

Another characteristic of Mrs. Marsh — and far from being unimportant — was her habit of great exactness in making a written record of articles sent in for gratuitous distribution, and in keeping a detailed account, even to every two-cent purchase, from her "Poor's Purse," which was entirely separate from the mission treasury.

Her industry was remarkable. It was not fragmentary, occasional, spasmodic; but maintained month by month, year after year, in heat and cold, in rain, snow, and tempest, in weariness, and often in great discomfort walking a long way from her home that she might minister to those in need.

After visiting thus from house to house all day, she has frequently sewed till the neighborhood of midnight preparing garments for the destitute. If there are any two stars symbolizing activity and perseverance, it must have been under their conjunction that she was born. Growing old and growing indolent had no affinity in her. It should be borne in mind that almost the whole of this good work amongst us has been performed on borrowed time, since the period of threescore and ten had been reached,—a period which by universal consent is allowed and is usually taken for repose, for remission of all laborious effort. At the hour of her decease last Saturday morning, Mrs. Marsh lacked only thirteen days of being seventy-six.

Look at her record for the last year only. Besides being almoner of other comforts and delicacies for the sick and destitute, she distributed more than one thousand two hundred garments and other articles to the needy; more than two thousand religious tracts, papers, books, and the like; and made rising of three thousand visits; which, owing to lameness, was a number less by one thousand than that of the year previous.

It should be stated that in early life her constitution and her health seemed not to be firm; and that frequently her toils have been prosecuted amidst no small amount of weakness and even suffering. Hers is one of the cases going to show that nothing conduces more to longevity than benevolent industry.

It should also be stated that this perseverance in Christian toil did not stand connected with personal necessities. Children had urged her to withdraw from these labors, and at

more than one of their homes is an apartment called "Mother's Room," which has for years stood waiting for her. Loyalty to the Master demanded, as she believed, that all remaining strength should, no less than in former years, be devoted to him. Her life was, to its close, a protest against the prevailing spirit of self-indulgence. Though fully aware that the hour of departure hastened on, she could not bring herself to the pitiful work of merely saving her own soul. There are certain of woman's rights which she strenuously yet modestly vindicated, — her right to quiet benevolent activity, her right to be a ministering angel. You may have noticed that trees and plants, when they feel the approach of decay, sometimes seem to hasten their fruitage just at the last. She was aware that her time was short, and she hastened to make the most of it. And it would be an important omission if the statement were not made that in her views of duty and in her Christian sympathies there was no narrowness. This work of city evangelization was no pet employment. It proceeded from genuine principle, which is always expansive and liberalizing. Her heart went out with special interest to the Home Missionary Society, and yet more toward the foreign fields of the American Board.

Had our deceased friend the weakness — the comparatively pardonable weakness of vanity? Had the characteristic infirmity of old age come upon her, — a fondness for recounting earlier or more recent labors and successes? From what has been said, you who are strangers to her would hardly expect it, for you have noticed that it is the lighter ears of grain that hold their heads highest, and wave about most freely. Mrs.

Marsh was a branch so laden with fruit as to hang low; she was clothed with humility. She sat at the Master's feet. She did not talk about meekness or modesty, — she illustrated them. Moses probably did not know how his face shone as he came down from the mount; our friend seemed not to know how radiant hers was with benevolence; nor how busy were her own feet in errands of kindness. All agree in testifying that this grace of humility shed a sweet, calm lustre over all her other virtues. The only one's faithfulness that she hesitated to speak of was her own; her uniform estimate of herself was, "I am an unprofitable servant." Who ever suspected her of vainglory? Who will say that she was not accustomed to give all glory and praise to God?

This quality was too genuine to admit of a sombre tinge. There seemed to be no trace of false spirituality. She exhibited a fine combination of cheerfulness and seriousness. In fact, she had no time for despondency about herself or others. Heart, lips, and hands were too full of something else to admit of moodiness.

Mrs. Marsh had often expressed a desire that, if it pleased God, she might not outlive active usefulness; that she might die in the harness, might die here amongst us. When two years ago a city missionary in Boston* died suddenly, she said she would like to go in the same way. God has substantially gratified her wish.

Now, in all the relations at which we have glanced, and positions as daughter, as head of a family, as head of a charitable institution, as private church-member, as a helpmeet

* Deacon Wilder.

for a Christian minister, and as city missionary, she exhibited the highest order of conscientiousness, and of consecration to God. Have you ever known one who walked more nearly in the steps of our Lord and Saviour, one who did less to please self? Do you recall an acquaintance who appeared to act less from impulse, or more uniformly from an abiding sense of duty, in all quietness and steadfastness doing with her might what the hands found to do? A friend, who has known her intimately for forty years, states, — "I never knew Mrs. Marsh lukewarm or with a cold heart. Her life has been a chain of well doing all along, without one breakage."

The impression with us is deep, that the character of our deceased friend was in its type a very uncommon one; that by the grace of God it attained to a moral grandeur seldom witnessed. Such concentration, such unselfishness, such devout persistency in endeavors to honor our Lord Jesus Christ raise her to a lofty level.

We would institute no comparison between her and the votaries of fashion, — the frivolous, selfish beings, whose thoughts centre chiefly on personal accomplishments and position. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." But for a moment bring to mind those of a more elevated grade, who, by the pen, the pencil, or in the departments of sculpture and music, minister to æsthetic enjoyment, and the mental improvement of a community. Select, if you please, one who attained to the same age with our departed friend, a woman of undoubted talents, of unimpeached morals, the most distinguished tragic actress that England ever produced, and who was applauded to the skies. Let Sarah Kemble

Siddons marchgrandly up that aisle. Ah, to what nothingness does she shrivel in the presence of this heavenly woman, around whom the light of the cross and the glories of eternity gather! Let the present Roman Pontiff, born the same year with this humble city missionary, enter in all his regalia; how does his triple crown grow dim before the crown of righteousness that adorns her head!

Ten days ago, at the last meeting of the Eliot City Mission Society, Mrs. Marsh, in view of failing strength, sent in her resignation. A committee were appointed to wait upon her, and convey an expression of the general appreciation in which she and her labors are held. They have as yet had no opportunity to do so. They are now present, and will briefly perform the duty assigned them.

Beloved Friend, — "beloved Persis, who hast labored much in the Lord," — we speak in behalf of ourselves, and we speak in behalf of multitudes. A church to whom you are endeared, a missionary association bearing an apostolic name, an affectionate and indebted Sabbath school, who are here at this hour, a whole section of our city, many scores of sick-rooms, — German mothers, Holland mothers, mothers from England and Scotland, — bid us say, We all respect you, we love you, we thank God for your coming amongst us. Your prayers have strengthened us; your wise and motherly ministrations have relieved us. The very stones of this rocky place have been worn to smoothness by your busy footsteps. The very dust of our streets is hallowed.

Tears fall apace; yet we praise the Lord that there remaineth a rest for his people.

"Rest, weary head;
Lie down to slumber in the peaceful tomb;
Light from above has broken through its gloom;
Here in the place where once thy Saviour lay,
Where he shall wake thee on a future day, —
Like a tired child upon its mother's breast, —
Rest, sweetly rest.

"Rest, spirit free,
In the green pastures of the heavenly shore,
Where sin and sorrow can approach no more;
With all the flock by the Good Shepherd fed,
Beside the streams of life eternal led,
Forever with thy God and Saviour blest,
Rest, sweetly rest."

US 13609.35
Memorial of Mrs. Lucy Gilpatrick Ma
Widener Library 006733025
3 2044 086 384 674